

Questionnaire on the implementation of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

**PREPARATION OF THE MID-TERM REPORT ON THE
INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE AND
NON-VIOLENCE FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD (2001-2010)**

Contact Information

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**I ACTIONS ACCOMPLISHED BY YOUR ORGANIZATION WITH REGARD TO
PROMOTING A
CULTURE OF PEACE**

1. Activity Description

A. September 21st every year

Hear the Children Day of Peace is a global annual celebration created by children themselves. The children decided to celebrate it on the International Day of Peace to give that day a special focus on creating mutually respectful working partnerships between children and adults to create a permanent Culture of Peace. Children promote the United Nations goals for world peace by educating the public about the value of peace through artistic activities, but more importantly by initiating projects that will bring peace to their communities. Hear the Children Day of Peace has been celebrated by thousands of communities around the globe. The celebrations often include a minute of silence for peace and the support of the United Nations General Assembly.

B. September 21, 2002 – September 21, 2003

The Young General Assembly launched the Hear the Children Day of Peace Campaign on the International Day of Peace that is also celebrated as the annual Hear the Children Day of Peace. The purpose of the Campaign was to help establish a permanent Culture of Peace. On the third Tuesday of each month young people and community leaders worked in partnership and planned/implemented/evaluated projects to make their local areas more peaceful. The 91 Member Organizations of the Young General Assembly in all five United Nations regions participated.

C. November 1, 2003 – August 12, 2004

The Young General Assembly Olympic Truce Letter Campaign aimed at having a period of peace worldwide while the Olympic games were going on in Athens. Children wrote letters to their governmental representatives and national officials as well as the media to promote the Olympic Truce period requested by United Nations General Assembly resolution.

D. August 2003-September 21, 2010

The Young General Assembly designed a Global Plan of Action in which Child Participation is the focus. There are many ways that people under the age of 18 can influence their governments to keep their promises and children themselves can implement the 21 targets set forth in A World Fit for Children. The children reason that if the 21 targets are fully implemented by the years 2010-2015, then the world will have a better chance to have a permanent Culture of Peace because if life is better for children, it is better for everyone. At the Abuja Annual Session in 2004 the Young General Assembly participants wrote 105 project plans so children can help their governments achieve the 21 A World Fit for Children targets. At the Blantyre, Malawi 2005 Annual Session they will focus on preventing any kind of violence.

E. September 21, 2005- June 21, 2006

The Young General Assembly will launch the Worldwide Arts and Crafts Contest for Disabled Children. Disabled children will depict their visions of a permanent culture of peace in any medium they like. They will send in a 10 minute video of themselves making their creation to be judged for cash prizes by a committee of disabled children in Wisconsin, USA.

2. What were the key difficulties encountered in your organization's activities for a culture of peace?

1. Funding is very difficult to obtain. The vast majority of corporations and foundations do not donate to international organizations run by children themselves.
2. National governmental officials are willing to meet with children in the beginning, but they do not follow through with the promises they make and they do not assign a staff member with whom the children can continue to communicate so communication breaks down and projects do not get fully completed.

3. Which of the eight areas of action listed on page 1 have been most important for your work and why do you consider them important?

A. Fostering democratic participation

This is the most important area for the children because they believe that the missing ingredient in peace building is Child Participation. Children are born wanting peace. They have to be taught to hate and to be violent. When adults are involved with children, the young people remind stressed adults of the importance of humane values, they have an abundance of creativity for new solutions and a viewpoint that is fresh and hopeful. The qualities that children have are vital elements in building a permanent Culture of Peace.

B. Fostering a culture of peace through education

If people were educated to be peaceful people right from birth, a permanent Culture of Peace would be possible within a lifetime. The other areas of action would become more quickly possible as well.

II GENERAL PROGRESS TOWARDS A CULTURE OF PEACE

4. Have you seen any progress towards a culture of peace (and its eight action areas) during the first five years of the International Decade (2001-2005)?

A. There has been a very small level of advancement for Child Participation in democratic participation. At least it doesn't seem to be a totally strange concept, but people are still defining what it is and how it best works. Youth Participation seems to be gaining more recognition right now.

United Nations headquarters still refuses to issue annual security passes to people 15, 16, and 17 years of age to do organizational business with UN officials.

B. There are many more programmes for school curricula to teach Peace Education, but more peer counseling and student run programmes are needed.

5. What do you consider to be the major obstacles for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence?

A. The children see the vast expenditures on military and wish these sums would be spent on education, eradicating poverty, health services, food security, etc. Too many people are making huge sums of money from war and they don't want to give up their source of wealth.

6. Have you been able to develop any ways of measuring medium- or long-term progress as a result of your activities? If so, please specify.

The Young General Assembly has developed a survey that measures the quality of Child Participation in a non-governmental organization. However, the funds are lacking to have this survey mailed out and filled in by thousands of NGOs.

III PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION

7. To a great extent, the creation of a culture of peace depends on the development of partnerships and cooperation among various actors. Have you created such partnerships in the process of working for a culture of peace? If so, please describe.

One of the major goals of the Young General Assembly is to build a permanent Culture of Peace. The Young General Assembly is a partnership of 91 Member Organizations in 52 countries. These organizations are working with other NGOs in their local areas as well as promoting peace through the use of peace poles and peace ceremonies involving locals and national governmental officials. Countless numbers of schools all over the world have partnered with Young General Assembly Member Organizations.

8. Are you aware of UNESCO's website on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (www.unesco.org/cp)? To what extent are its resources and tools (calendar of events, project database) useful for your organization?

Yes. The website is frequently referred to in the Young General Assembly monthly e-mail bulletin "Future Generation."

IV COMMITMENT TOWARDS NEW INITIATIVES AND NEW DIRECTIONS FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE

9. Please list the new projects planned by your organization to promote a culture of peace in the next five years.

A. The Young General Assembly Global Plan of Action aiming at a permanent Culture of Peace will continue at least until 2010.

B. The Young General Assembly will launch the Worldwide Arts and Crafts Contest for Disabled Children on the International Day of Peace September 21, 2005. Disabled children will express their visions of a permanent culture of peace in any medium they like. They will send in a 10 minute video of themselves making their creation to be judged for cash prizes by a committee of disabled children in Wisconsin, USA.

10. Do you think there are any priority domains amongst the areas defined in the Programme of Action? If so, please specify.

A. Fostering democratic participation

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B. Fostering a culture of peace through education

If people were educated to be peaceful people right from birth, a permanent Culture of Peace would be possible within a lifetime. The other areas of action would become more quickly possible as well.

11. Please describe briefly how you envisage the approaches to a culture of peace and the promotion thereof over the next five years.

A. The children envision an increased acceptance and employment of quality Child Participation that will enhance the lives of children in becoming peaceful people who will grow to be the world's future policy making officials.

B. The children also envision a switch in the focus of the military from fighting wars to protecting the environment.